

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 19, 2012

The Honorable Eric Holder
Attorney General
U.S. Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20530-0001

Dear Attorney General Holder:

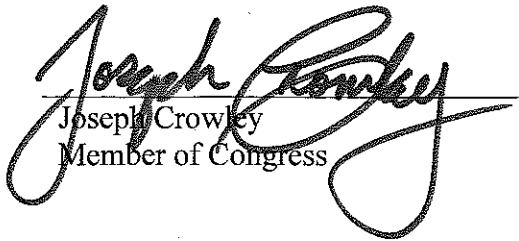
As you know, many Sikh-Americans have been subjected, unfortunately, to bigoted hate crimes. In the last year alone, two Sikh-American men in Sacramento were murdered, a Sikh Gurdwara in Michigan was defaced and a Sikh-American man was beaten in New York. These kinds of hate-motivated attacks have no place in the United States. To address this growing concern, we urge the Department of Justice and Federal Bureau of Investigation to begin recording and tracking hate crimes suffered by Sikh-Americans as part of its *Hate Crime Incident Report Form* (1-699).

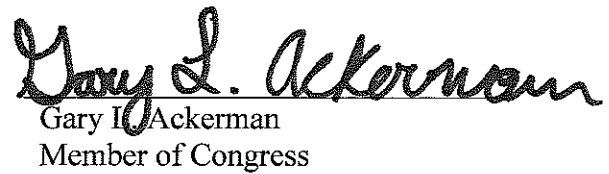
According to its accompanying guide, Form 1-699 is designed to “assist the FBI in compiling timely, comprehensive, and accurate data regarding the incidence and prevalence of hate crime throughout the [n]ation.” The *Report Form* not only serves as the primary mechanism by which the federal government collects and documents hate crimes committed in the United States, it also helps form the basis for decision-making on the deployment of law enforcement resources. Yet, our understanding is that the FBI may be relying on older forms which count hate crimes against Sikhs as anti-Islamic (Muslim) hate crimes. We believe that not including Sikhs within hate-crime data-collection may diminish the safety of the 500,000-strong Sikh-American community and weaken the quality of essential hate crimes data overall.

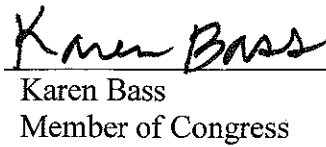
Numerous reports have documented how those practicing the Sikh religion are often targeted for hate violence because of their religiously-mandated turbans -- i.e. *because* of their Sikh identity, regardless of whether the attacker understands the victim to be Sikh or not. Sadly, victimization begins at a young age -- Sikh youth are among the most bullied in the nation, with approximately 3 out of 4 Sikh boys severely bullied in school. Given that this discrete community is so acutely susceptible to hate violence in the United States, we believe it is critically important for authorities to devise means of tracking crimes committed against Sikhs. We also believe, as do many leaders in the Sikh community, that doing so would further encourage affected community members to report hate crimes to law enforcement officials and strengthen relationships between communities, the FBI and the Department of Justice.

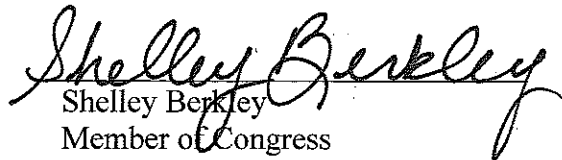
We understand that the Department of Justice has carried out a variety of outreach efforts in coalition with members of the 500,000-strong Sikh-American community. We applaud these very important efforts and strongly urge you to take the next step by making this administrative alteration. We understand there may be a few options for how to put this change into practice and would appreciate an opportunity to meet with you to discuss this matter further.

Sincerely,


Joseph Crowley
Member of Congress

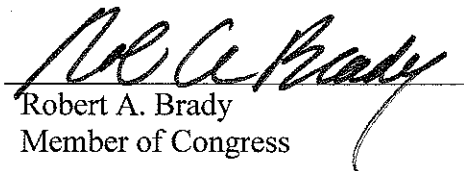

Gary L. Ackerman
Member of Congress

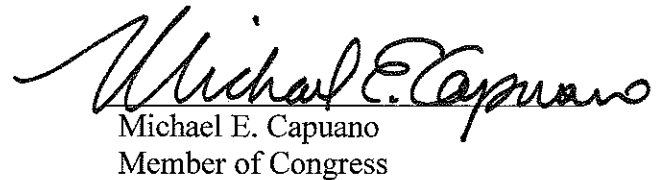

Karen Bass
Member of Congress

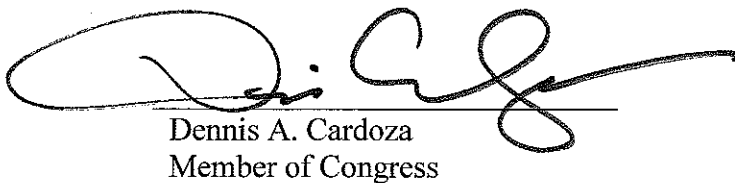

Shelley Berkley
Member of Congress


Howard L. Berman
Member of Congress

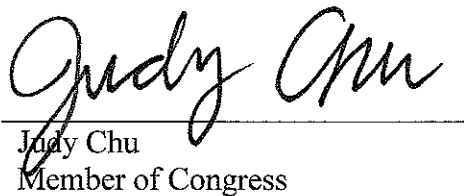

Earl Blumenauer
Member of Congress

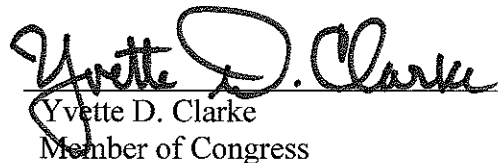

Robert A. Brady
Member of Congress

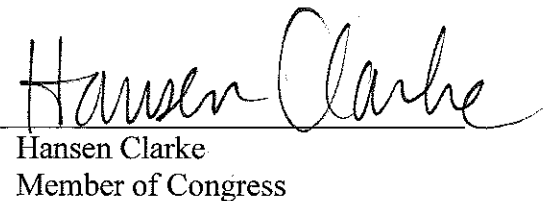

Michael E. Capuano
Member of Congress

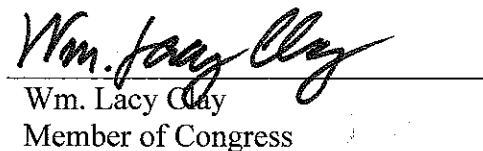

Dennis A. Cardoza
Member of Congress


André Carson
Member of Congress


Judy Chu
Member of Congress


Yvette D. Clarke
Member of Congress


Hansen Clarke
Member of Congress


Wm. Lacy Clay
Member of Congress



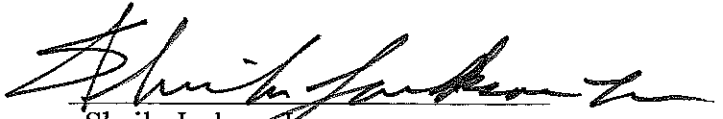
Michael M. Honda
Member of Congress



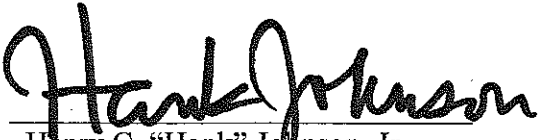
Steve Israel
Member of Congress



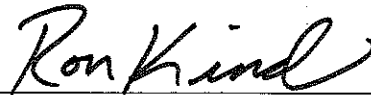
Jesse L. Jackson, Jr.
Member of Congress



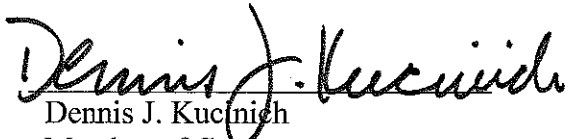
Sheila Jackson Lee
Member of Congress



Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr.
Member of Congress



Ron Kind
Member of Congress



Dennis J. Kucinich
Member of Congress



John B. Larson
Member of Congress



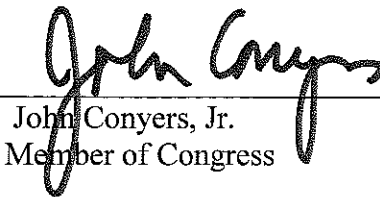
Barbara Lee
Member of Congress



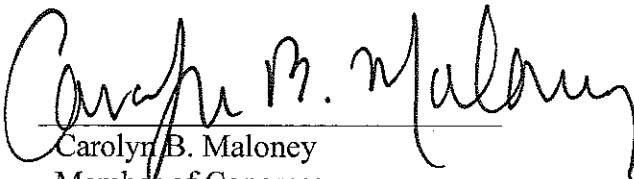
Zoe Lofgren
Member of Congress



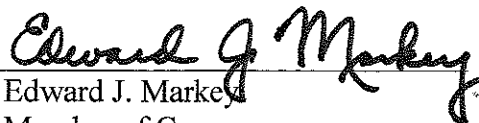
Ben Ray Lujan
Member of Congress



John Conyers, Jr.
Member of Congress



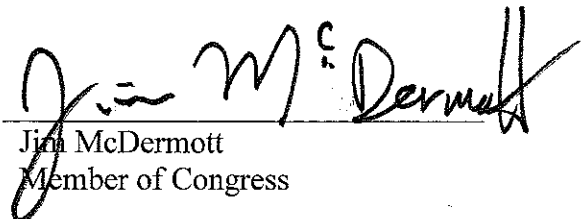
Carolyn B. Maloney
Member of Congress



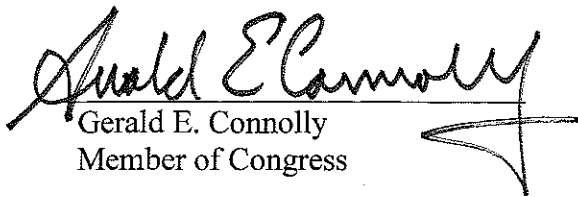
Edward J. Markey
Member of Congress

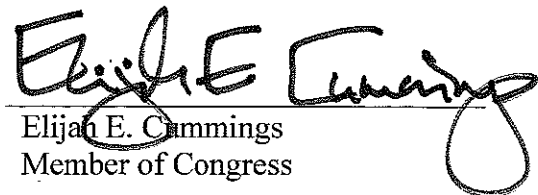


Betty McCollum
Member of Congress

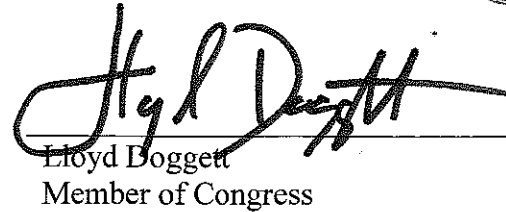


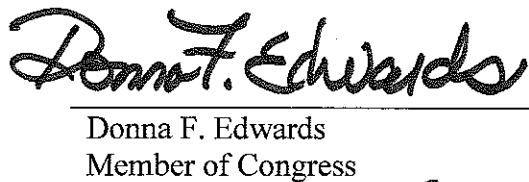
Jim McDermott
Member of Congress

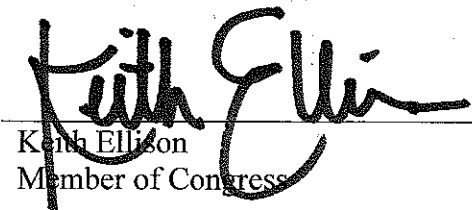

Gerald E. Connolly
Member of Congress

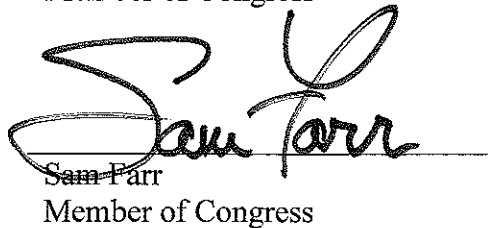

Elijah E. Cummings
Member of Congress

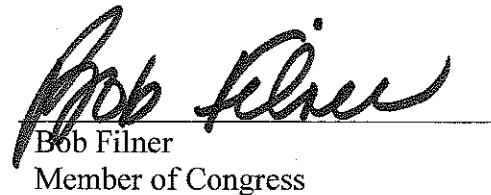

Danny K. Davis
Member of Congress


Lloyd Doggett
Member of Congress

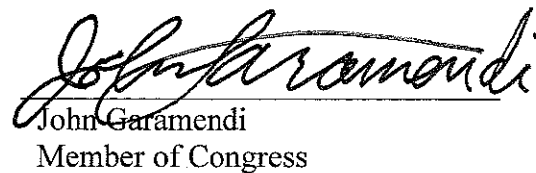

Donna F. Edwards
Member of Congress


Keith Ellison
Member of Congress

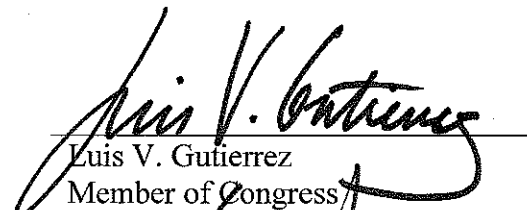

Sam Farr
Member of Congress

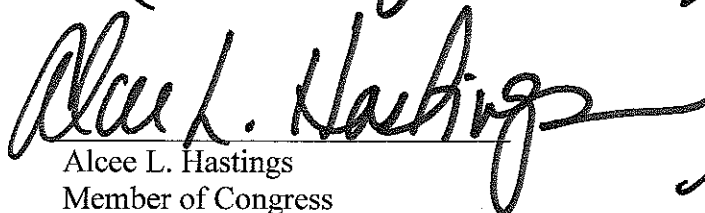

Bob Filner
Member of Congress

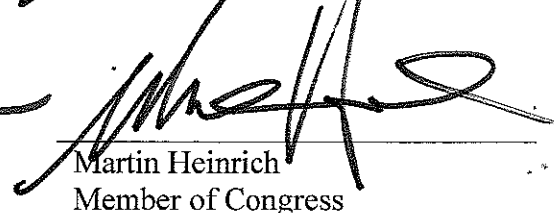

Barney Frank
Member of Congress

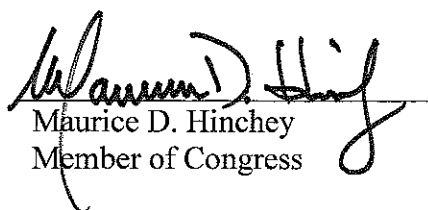

John Garamendi
Member of Congress

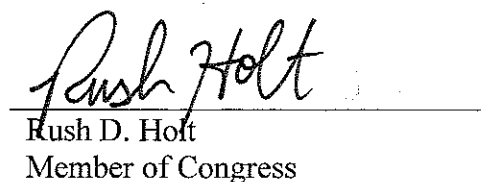

Raul M. Grijalva
Member of Congress



Luis V. Gutierrez
Member of Congress



Alcee L. Hastings
Member of Congress

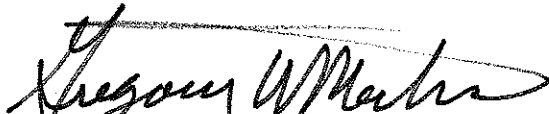

Martin Heinrich
Member of Congress



Maurice D. Hinchey
Member of Congress


Rush D. Holt
Member of Congress



James P. McGovern
Member of Congress


Jerry McNerney
Member of Congress



Gregory W. Meeks
Member of Congress

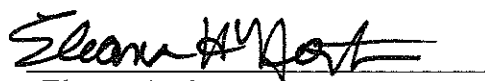

George Miller
Member of Congress

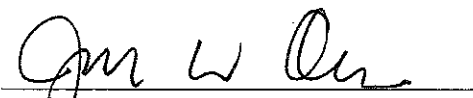

Gwen Moore
Member of Congress

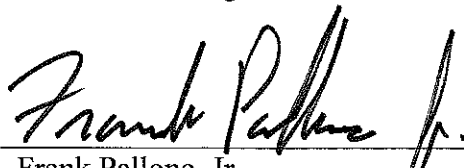

James P. Moran
Member of Congress

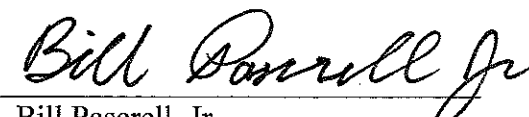

Grace F. Napolitano
Member of Congress

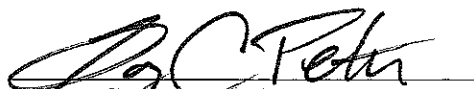

Richard E. Neal
Member of Congress

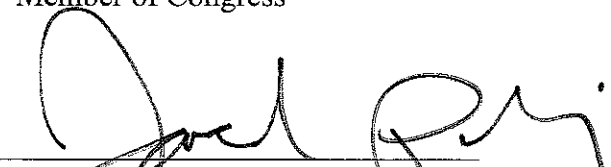

Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress



John W. Olver
Member of Congress



Frank Pallone, Jr.
Member of Congress



Bill Pascrell, Jr.
Member of Congress



Gary C. Peters
Member of Congress

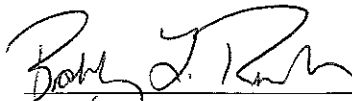

Jared Polis
Member of Congress

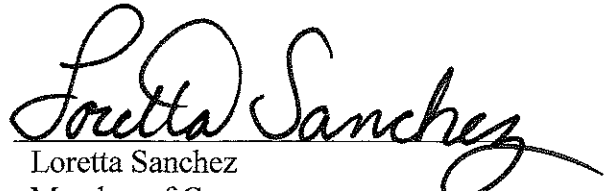

Charles B. Rangel
Member of Congress

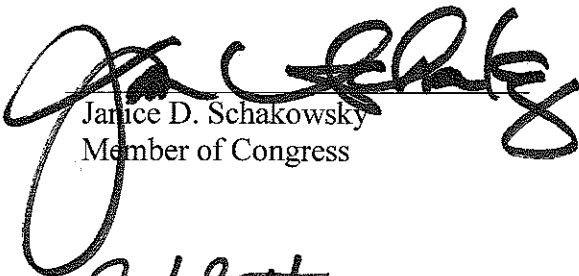

Laura Richardson
Member of Congress

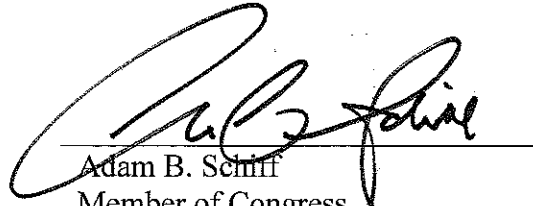

Steven R. Rothman
Member of Congress



C. A. Dutch Ruppertsberger
Member of Congress

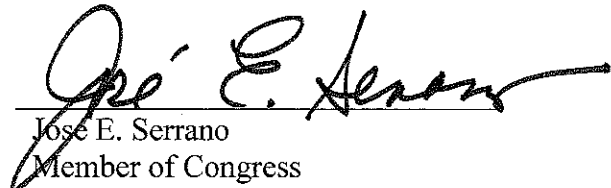

Bobby Rush
Member of Congress

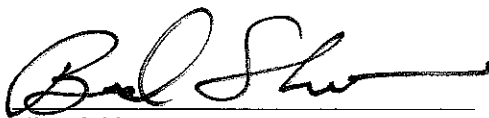

Loretta Sanchez
Member of Congress

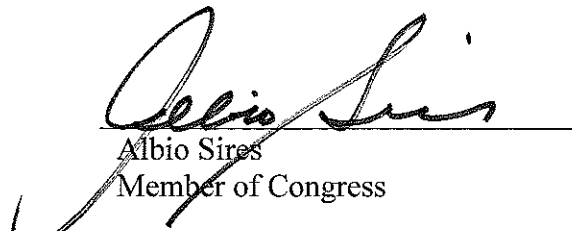

Janice D. Schakowsky
Member of Congress

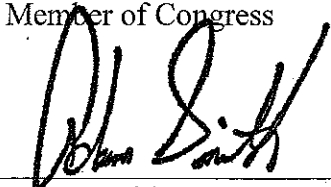

Adam B. Schiff
Member of Congress

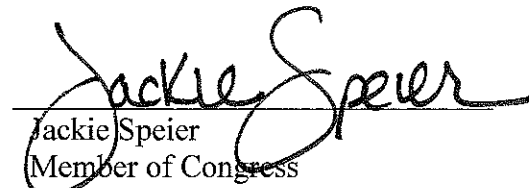

Robert C. "Bobby" Scott
Member of Congress

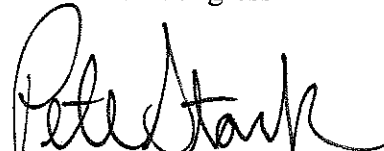

Jose E. Serrano
Member of Congress



Brad Sherman
Member of Congress

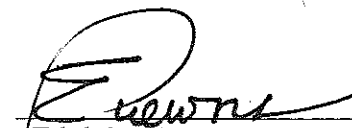

Albio Sires
Member of Congress



Adam Smith
Member of Congress

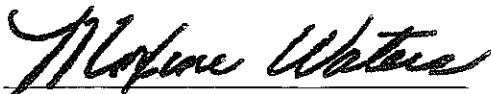

Jackie Speier
Member of Congress


Fortney Pete Stark
Member of Congress


Bennie G. Thompson
Member of Congress


Edolphus Towns
Member of Congress


Chris Van Hollen
Member of Congress



Maxine Waters
Member of Congress



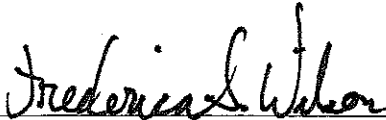
Melvin L. Watt
Member of Congress



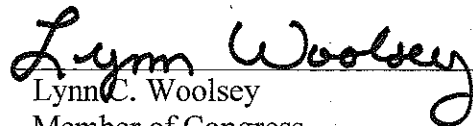
Henry A. Waxman
Member of Congress



Peter Welch
Member of Congress



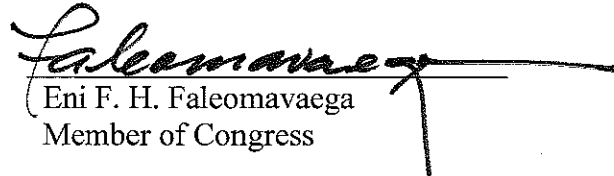
Frederica S. Wilson
Member of Congress



Lynn C. Woolsey
Member of Congress



Marcy Kaptur
Member of Congress



Eni F. H. Faleomavaega
Member of Congress



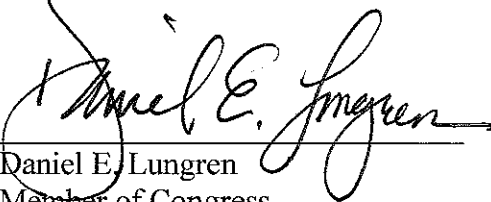
Lucille Roybal-Allard
Member of Congress



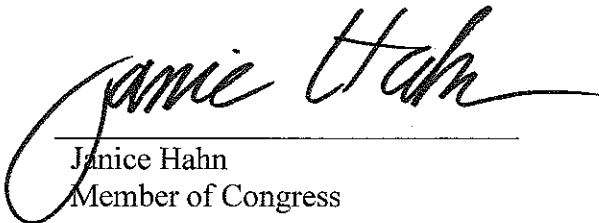
Carolyn McCarthy
Member of Congress



David E. Price
Member of Congress



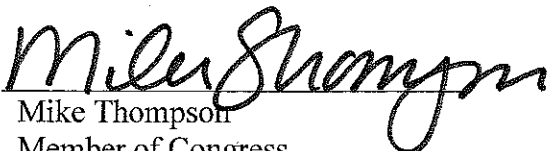
Daniel E. Lungren
Member of Congress



Janice Hahn
Member of Congress



Pedro R. Pierluisi
Member of Congress



Mike Thompson
Member of Congress